COSECHA
WINTER/SPRING 2026

MELTING THE ICE AGE

WHO IS SEMILLAS?

THEY TRIED TO BURY US, BUT THEY DIDN'T KNOW WE WERE SEEDS

SEMILLAS TN is the only grassroots community organization in Chattanooga founded by Latinx immigrants. Spearheaded by ordinary working-class folks, our mission is to organize, mobilize, build power, and transform the city we call home through the power of education.

Through a model unique to our region, we empower Latinx folks as well our larger community with the tools, knowledge, and education necessary to understand, navigate, and uproot the systemic barriers and obstacles we collectively face. Upon doing so, we activate and mobilize the next generation of leaders, imagine and create community-grounded solutions, and win victories that cultivate positive progress for our city.

WHO IS COSECHA?

DANI, LOGAN, NAOMI, MO, AND EVERYONE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS EDITION, INCLUDING SOFIA, CLARA, SARAH ANN, AND OLIVIA

CoseCHA is a seasonal zine meant to serve as an educational and community resource; dedicated to reporting on local movement work, mass political education, and advocating for change in Chattanooga, TN. Believing that literature is a powerful medium for organizing community members and challenging systems of misinformation, we cover the social and political issues that matter to our local community members in Chattanooga and use this platform as a space to digest, converse, break down, and understand the challenges our community is facing. Fully committed to showcasing the stories and work of our community members, CoseCHA aims to foster solidarity and alignment, nurture imagination, and inspire action in our city as we dream and work for a better tomorrow.

UNA LETRA DE CLARA

Me llamo Clara, soy de la Ciudad de México y pensando en lo que iba a escribir. Recordé que a la edad de 10 años, estando en el quinto grado de la primaria, tuvimos una suplente que sólo molestaba a mis jóvenes compañeros, por el hecho de sentirse superior a unos los "premiaba" y a Otros los "castigaba"El premio era que te permitía golpear a los compañeros "malos"con una regla en las manos. Cuando me dio la oportunidad de hacerlo a mí, simplemente me negué y fui directamente con el director de la escuela, argumentando que no regresaría al salón de clases si este maestro continuaba en nuestra clase, así que ocurrió lo que tenía que pasar, porque no fui sola junto conmigo, iban algunos de mis compañeros que habían sido castigados así que nos organizamos y los gramos que despidieran al maestro, y empezó la emoción. Podría decirse de sentir que yo tenía el poder de organizar a Otros y cambiar las cosas que no me gustan oh sentía que eran incorrectas oh de beneficio para unos pocos ,pasó el tiempo y hice otro par de cosas similares en la escuela en otros niveles, pero una vez casada y con un trabajo y una vida de adulto con responsabilidades pensé que había pasado sin embargo cuando tuve mi primer hijo y al pasar el tiempo lo vi empezar a hacer lo mismo dentro de mí pensé. Bueno nos acabó continúa por otra generación, nunca creí que a esta edad en este país pudiéramos alzar nuestra voz y clamar por justicia y estar en contra de los actos reprobables que existen. Ahora a nuestro alrededor. ***Me encanta ser parte de la comunidad y me encanta pensar que como pueblo y exactamente como personas tenemos el poder de decidir qué es lo que queremos luchar sí, directamente con las injusticias a las que nos hemos sometidos.***

En el transcurso de mi vida me he enfrentado muchos Retos cambiar de país. No fue fácil. Dejamos todo atrás. No sólo dejamos una familia.

dejamos, costumbres, amores, cultura, compañía, Comida, como extraño la comida!. Sin embargo, un bien mayor nos empuja a buscar la felicidad. En otro lado pensando en qué será lo mejor para nuestra familia. En este caso para nuestros hijos. siempre ha habido racismo a nuestro rededor, siempre ha habido elitismo para nuestra comunidad o contra nuestra comunidad, pero nunca Había sentido este odio inmenso por nosotros por lo somos, por lo que representamos, incluso por nuestro color de piel por nuestro idioma por esas costumbres por nuestro acento, y aquí estamos luchando otra vez por defender nuestras creencias, nuestro amor, nuestra comunidad, nuestros derechos básicos como humanos y sí, por lo que dejamos para que valga la pena por los que no se pueden defender por lo que viene por el futuro con nuestros hijos por nuestros niños, pues nuestros viejos por nuestros ancestros no quisiera que al final de mi vida me fuera con el sentimiento de que no hice nada de que sólo quedé viendo, o esperando que alguien me hiciera por mí, amo a ver estos jóvenes luchar tomar tiempo de sus tiempos, fuera del trabajo por dedicar 24 horas a trabajar en algo que ellos también creen, amo la pasión que ellos despiertan en mí, a pesar de que por mi edad a veces me siento tan cansada físicamente, yo no creo en una humanidad sin humanidad, sin sentimientos, sin lucha soy parte de Semillas, porque creo que cada uno realmente somos una que puede no sólo plantarse si no germinar, crecer y hacerse grande y fuerte y poder ser un cobijo o una sombra. Para quién lo necesita. ***Creo que podemos convertirnos en un bosque grande y hermoso que ayudará a ecosistemas de la vida y de la humanidad, así de grandioso.*** No quiero dejar un recuerdo de mí. Quiero dejar una huella que marque a alguien más y que le inspira seguir adelante. Quiero ser recordada como alguien que luchó a pesar de los problemas y a pesar de las pérdidas y a pesar de todo.

Aunque no estoy solo en la lucha, me pregunto: si no soy yo, ¿entonces quién? Y si no es ahora, ¿cuándo? – Clara

A LETTER FROM CLARA

My name is Clara. I'm from Mexico, City and right now, I'm thinking about what I'm going to write. I remember at the age of 10, being in the fifth grade of elementary school, we had a substitute teacher that felt superior to my younger classmates. He would "punish" some students and "reward" others. Winning the prize allowed you to hit "bad" classmates with a ruler in your hands. When he gave me the opportunity to do it to another classmate, I simply refused and went directly to the school principal, arguing that I would not return to the classroom if this teacher continued in our class. So what had to happen happened. I did not go alone, because some of my classmates who had been punished came along. We organized ourselves among the grades and got the teacher fired, and the emotion began. That moment made me recognize I had the power to organize others and change the things that I didn't like, things that I felt were incorrect or only beneficial for a few. Time passed and I once again organized with other students at school on several occasions. Later on, I got married and started a job and an adult life with responsibilities. I thought I was done with organizing, but when I saw my first child start doing the same as he grew up, I thought, "Well, it's over for another generation." I never thought that at this age in this country we could raise our voices and cry out for justice and be against the reprehensible acts that exist. ***I love being part of the community and I love thinking that as a people, and exactly as people, we have the power to decide what we want to fight, yes, directly against the injustices to which we have been subjected to.***

In the course of my life I have faced many challenges to change countries. It wasn't easy. We left everything behind. We didn't just leave a family. We left a country. We left our identity, or at least part of our identity. We left our customs,

loves, culture, company, food- how I miss food! However, a greater good pushed us to seek happiness. On the other hand, we were thinking about what would be best for our family – in this case – for our children. There has always been racism around us, and there has always been elitism for our community or against our community, but I have never felt this immense hatred for us, who we are, what we represent, our language, our customs, our accent, and even our skin color. Here we are fighting again to defend our beliefs, our love, our community, our basic rights as humans, and yes, for what we leave behind to be worth it. We fight for those who cannot defend themselves, for what is to come, for the future with our children and for our children, for our old people, and for our ancestors. I don't want to feel at the end of my life that I did nothing, that I was just watching or waiting for someone to do something for me. I love to see these young people fight, to make time outside of work for this, for dedicating 24 hours to something that they also believe in. I love the passion that they awaken in me, despite the fact that because of my age sometimes I feel so tired physically. I do not believe in a humanity without Humanity, without feelings, without struggle. I am part of Semillas because I believe that each of us can not only be planted, but also germinate, grow, and become big and strong and be able to be a shelter or a shadow for those who need it. ***I think we can become a big and beautiful forest that will help ecosystems of life and humanity, that's how great we can be.*** I don't want to leave a memory of me. I want to leave a mark that marks someone else and that inspires them to move forward. I want to be remembered as someone who fought despite the problems and despite the losses and despite everything.

Although I am not alone in the struggle, I ask myself: if not me, then who? And if not now, then when? – Clara

SEMILLAS' MODEL OF CHANGE

1

We learn and grow together

We address the cycle of survival by providing community-based education, fostering understanding of systemic oppression, and empowering individuals to initiate real change.

Collective reimagining to create solutions we need

2

We connect with our community, acively listen, and collaboratively use creativity to envision and implement the solutions they need.

3

Organize, mobilize, build P.O.P. Power

To achieve victories, we build people, organizational, and political power by organizing the community, mobilizing people and allies, and running issue-based campaigns to drive long-term positive change.

EL MODELO DE CAMBIO DE SEMILLAS

1

Aprendemos y crecemos juntos

A través de oportunidades educativas comunitarios, equipamos a nuetra comunidad con la educación necesario para novegar los condiciones de nuetras vidas, comprender los sistemas de opresión, y nos empaderamos para econocer que el cambio comienza con nosotros.

Imaginacion colectiva para crear soluciones

2

Nos reunimos con nuestras comunidad, creamos un espacio para escuchar, y usamos nuestra creatividad e imaginación para imaginar las soluciones que necesitamos.

3

Organizar, movilizar, construir Poder P.O.P

Para ganar victarios, construimos el poder del pueblo, organizacional y politico. Para hacerio, organizamos nuestra comunidad, movilizamos a nuestra gente y aliados, y organizamos compañas para impulsar nuestras soluciones y cultivar el cambio positivo.

Saturday, February 28th
CALL TO ACTION

On Februrary 24th, ICE raided and terrorized Chattanoooga, abducting at least seven community members. During this atrocious infiltration, Semillas responded swiftly, communicating using the SALUTE method. In response, the community came together to put up posters and art around Chattanooga and surrounding areas to remind our neighborhoods that ningun ser humano es ilegal and that ICE isn't welcome here or anywhere.

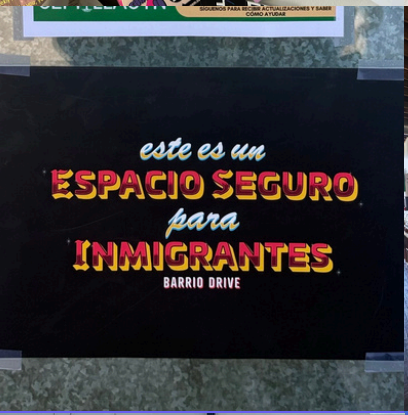
On the morning of February 28th, volunteers gathered at Miller Park to gather materials to put up posters with SALUTE/ACTUAR guidelines, Know Your Rights strips, and art prints around Chattanooga. to spread the word about Semillas TN. For years and especially right now, Semillas has been working tirelessly to create a safer Chattanooga by developing their migra watch program (MELT).

ICE OUT OF CHATTANOOGA
SEMILLASTN

SEMILLAS

Sunrise Movement
Zero Waste Festival
NO HUMAN BEING IS ILLEGAL
Music | Raffle | Art | Food | Clothing Swap
Educational Workshops

CHATTANOOGA
COMO REPORTAR
423 - 402 - 0820
SEMILLASTN


este es un
ESPACIO SEGURO
para
INMIGRANTES
BARRIO DRIVE

OPEN
SERVICIOS
ENVIO DE DINERO
RECARGAS TELEFONICAS
ABORRETERIA EN GENERAL
PRODUCTOS CENTROAMERICANOS
ENVIO DE PAQUETERIA A MEXICO
Y TODO CENTRO AMERICA

NO HUMAN BEING IS ILLEGAL

EVITA A LA MIGRA! APRENDETE

NUESTRO SISTEMA DE CODIGO

CÓDIGO VERDE

El Código verde indica que la zona indicada esta segura y libre de actividad peligrosa para la comunidad

CÓDIGO AMARILLO

El Código Amarillo indica actividad sospechosa posiblemente relacionada con la migra. Puede considerarse una advertencia. También usamos el código amarillo para asesorar una zona después de actividad migratoria hasta aclarar que la zona esta completamente segura.

CÓDIGO NARANJA

El Código Naranja indica que se han recibido reportes de la migra en la comunidad y Semillas **esta en alerta e investigando la situación.** Notificaremos a la comunidad cualquier información que confirmemos – sea o no sea la migra.

CÓDIGO ROJO

El Código Rojo indica que hemos confirmado presencia de la migra/ ICE. **MANTENTE LEJOS Y EVITA** la zona indicada. Compartiremos noticias con la comunidad cuando la zona ya no sea peligrosa.

SEMILLASTN

Si sospecha de la presencia de ICE en su zona, por favor siga estas pautas al realizar su reporte. Al contar con un sistema de reporte cohesionado, se descartan los informes falsos, lo que permite centrarse en las amenazas reales.

AVOID DETENTION BY ICE, LEARN

OUR SAFETY CODE SYSTEM

GREEN

CODE GREEN indicates that the reported zone and area are safe and free from activity that poses a threat for the community.

YELLOW

CODE YELLOW indicates that suspicious activity possibly related to immigration has been reported and should be considered a warning. We also use yellow to advise caution in an area after activity has been investigated and typically remains in effect until it is confirmed that the area is completely safe.

ORANGE

CODE ORANGE indicates that strong reports of immigration enforcement activity have been made and that Semillas is actively on alert and **investigating the situation.** We will notify the community of any information we confirm – **whether or not it is confirmed presence and activity.**

RED

Code Red means we have confirmed sightings of I.C.E. **STAY AWAY** from the area and on alert for updates as we will notify the community when the area is no longer a danger zone.

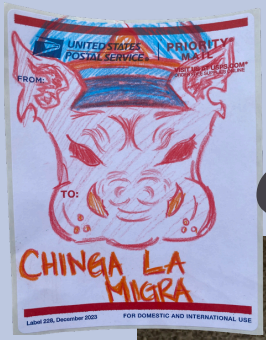
SEMILLASTN

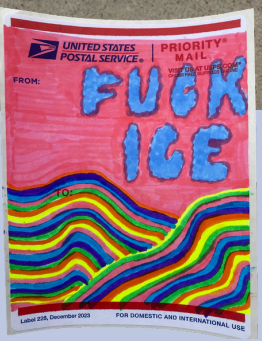
If you suspect ICE in your area, please follow these guidelines when reporting. When we have a cohesive system of reporting, it weeds out false reports so the actual threats can be focused on.

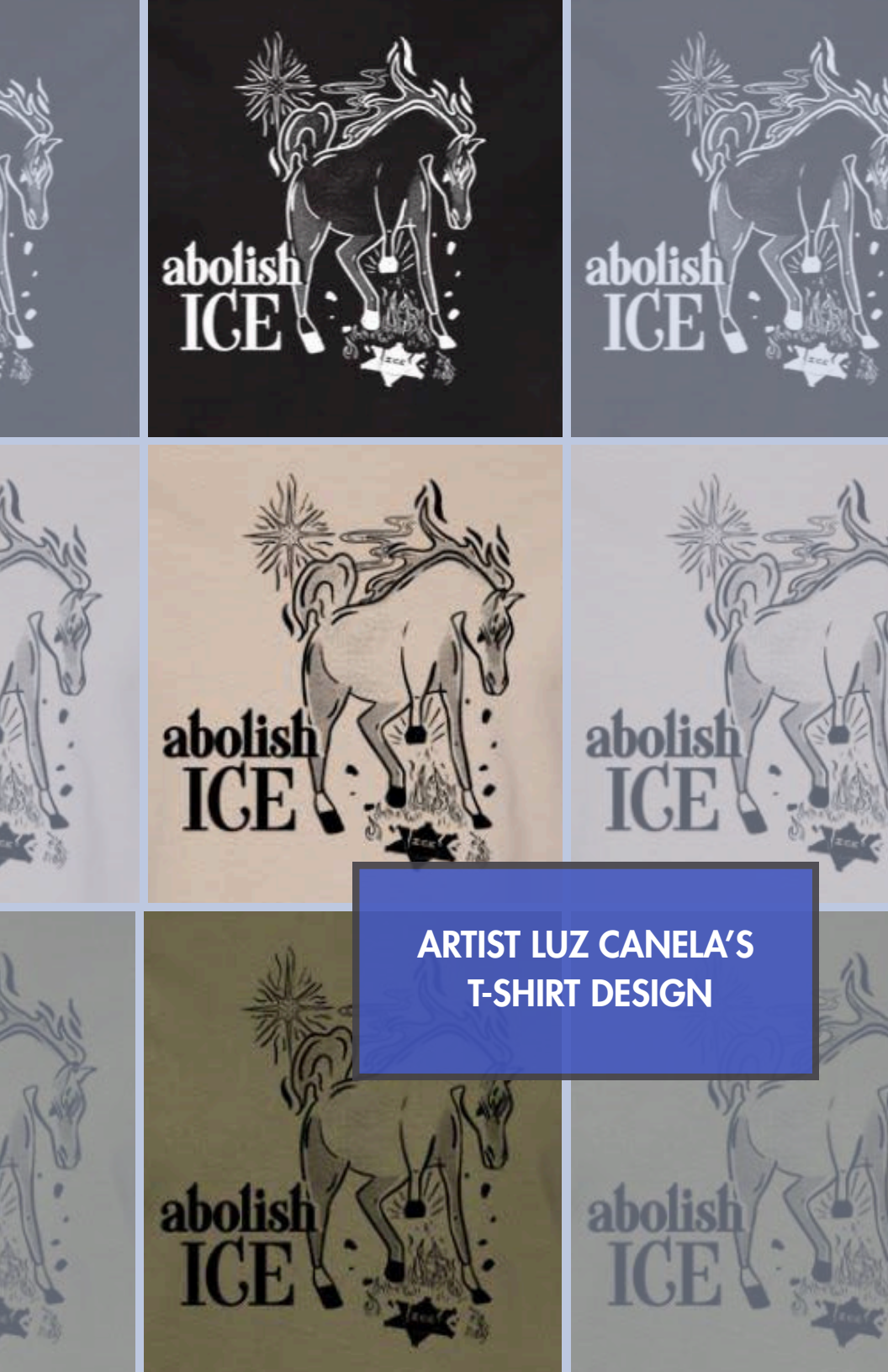
COMMUNITY ART

CHINGA LA MIGRA

ICE OUT!







ARTIST LUZ CANELA'S
T-SHIRT DESIGN

SEMILLAS ART COLLECTIVE

Artists (yes, you) in Chattanooga who are interested in creatng anticolonial art that transcends beyond protest art, challenging the viewer to think critically about the corruption happening around them. Art tells a story, and the art we want to make is real about the struggles our community is facing and imagines the change we want to see.

This is a call to make art that envisions change.

A call to make art to connect with our youth.

It is a dark time, and this is how we respond.

If this resonates with you, consider joining the art collective at Semillas by reaching out to us on Instagram @semillastn.org

Bracelets made for community at the first art collective meeting

SEMILLAS ART COLECTIVO

Buscamos artistas de Chattanooga (como tú) que están interesados en crear arte anticolonial que trasciende más allá del arte de protesta, desafiando al espectador a pensar críticamente sobre la corrupción que ocurre a su alrededor. El arte cuenta una historia, y el arte que queremos crear es real; trata de las luchas que enfrenta nuestra comunidad e imagina el cambio que queremos ver.

Ésta es una llamada a crear arte que visualice el cambio.
Una llamada crear arte que nos conecte con nuestra juventud.
Son tiempos oscuros, y así elegimos responder.

Si esto te resuena, considera unirte al colectivo artístico de Semillas contactándonos en Instagram: @semillastn.org

Pulseras hechas para la comunidad en la primera reunión del colectivo artístico

semillas seedlings

interviews with our chattanooga community, allies, & neighbors following the february 28, 2026 day of action

Why did you choose to sign up for the Day of Action with Semillas?

V felt like she had to do something! When she looks back, she wants to be able to say that when things were really bad, "I did not sit back and wait for them to get better. It's easy to do, but I want to be intentional about doing all I can to help." She and her boyfriend signed up for the Day of Action so that they could support their community.

B knew she wanted to get involved in Semillas after hearing one of the members speak about the organization, our current political moment, and our lived realities as Chattanoogans at a local "know your rights" event. Bee was encouraged to hear this message and see others agreeing as well. A "doer," ***B*** immediately followed Semillas on Instagram and looked for ways to get connected. As soon as she saw the Day of Action post, Bee jumped at the opportunity to get involved and signed up.

A was really excited for the Day of Action, knowing that now was the "perfect time to show power of community." To her, it was the perfect way to remind folks that we are stronger together, and that "we need all of us" to fight against ICE and fascism. A further reflected, saying she knew the Day of Action would also be a great way to disseminate information from a source that people know and trust.

In what ways do you see yourself and community preserving and fighting against injustice amidst an "Ice Age"?

Being vocal, being loud, and being present. Fascism works when people are compliant. *V* says, "it may keep get scarier, but we have to keep fighting back, because that's the only way things can get better."

B recognizes that people have been fighting against injustice for a long time. She is inspired by Minnesota, and knows that organizing work is happening here, too. *B* says this work happens in the background, "centered around people we need to be standing up for." It requires time, commitment, and sensitivity. People need to tap in and be open to education and unlearning things. In her own life, *B* is guided by something a professor once told her: "everyone is a person of worth, simply because they exist."

A says she and her community are holding onto hope, knowing that even if it seems impossible, "we are going to fight." She expanded on the idea of hope; rather than hope representing a vague optimism for the future, she knows hope to be an everyday choice to persevere, a grit and determination of spirit amidst struggle.

How long have you lived in Chatt? What's changed? What would you like to see more of here?

V has been here for 5 years, this summer. V says, "Chattanooga feels like a unique town in Tennessee, with a lot of weird and friendly and outdoorsy people," and hopes to see more diversity and community and inclusion here!

"Since 2013. Downtown Chattanooga has grown a lot. There's a larger demographic of young people, an influx of non-profits, and it's become more liberal and 'entrepreneurial,'" B says. "Everyone is fragmented, and Chattanooga is still very segregated and gentrified." Amidst this frustration, she says that it's "positive to see people showing up and wanting to change." B would like to see "people and causes working together, more integration and diversity," and to see Chattanooga "gain more than we lose."

Since August 2023. *A's* perception of Chattanooga has shifted a lot lately. Recently, she has grown more aware of the ins and outs of Chattanooga, and isn't sure how much her new understanding impacts her view of change. What she has seen is a lot of "apathy, complacency, desire for comfort, [and] doing things that feel palatable."

A recognizes that many might have good intentions, but there is an unwillingness to "change their minds about what liberation looks like." In the past year, *A* has seen an uptick in energy, and wonders if this is yet another cyclical situation of people committing to short term activism and small changes, but giving up not long after. She feels a change happening, and hopes this time is different, knowing that sustained energy can be plugged into movement organizing. *A* wants to see a change in the culture of how we view taking care of each other; instead of seeing people as charity, she hopes people will re-learn what it means to protect each other through mutual aid and intentional relationships. She wants people to "take risks, be uncomfortable, make sacrifices, [and] see beauty, hope, [and] strength in doing those things together, not alone."

What brings you joy?

"Being outside! Moving my body, good food, and feeling connected to other people," even though V says she "tends to be an introvert."

"Springtime! The winter sleep is hard," B says, "but spring brings sunshine as the world begins to wake up. People seem to be more connected, and the community is out and about, validating and supporting one another." B loves nature, camping, paddle-boarding, and "tedious crafting," working with objects teeny tiny and overly large.

Being outside, birds, and dogs, and meaningful community bring *A* joy. *A* loves being with community that she can truly be herself around, where she doesn't have to pretend to "have it all together before I come to the table."

We really like to share with folks that there's a place in the movement for everyone and that our movement is made up of regular people. What motivates you to want to organize?

"If we don't organize together, we are all at risk," *V* says. We are all neighbors—no matter our skin color or our difference—and we are stronger and safer together.

B is "joyfully ridiculous" and makes things fun. As a nurse practitioner, she is motivated to care for people, to see the "myriad of rainbowness of humanness" in everyone. *B* is an "idea farm," curious about everything.

A says that the realization that organizing is the only way we'll beat this motivates her: "it's worked in the past and it will work again." She points to the generations before who've organized and seen it work. "It's too hard to work on your own, we all have a place in this," *A* says. Within organizing, there is a paradigm shift that views the person as a whole. It's long-term, not transactional. Instead of viewing people as a means to an end in order to achieve a goal, organizing prioritizes relationship. *A* says, "we are surrounded by power structures that tell us we should do things on our own, [and] thrive off of burn out." They make it easy to become discouraged, to not rely on each other, know one another, or see humanity of others. But, there is hope, *A* responds, "we beat this by doing it together!"

JOIN THE GARDEN

THE SEMILLAS TN VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

WANT TO VOLUNTEER?
SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW:

¿QUIERES SER VOLUNTARIO?
ESCANEA EL CÓDIGO DE ARRIBA.

The Ice Age

By Naomi Martin

We are living in an Ice Age. Many are waking up to the reality of corruption within the United States government. People are being kidnapped off the streets and murdered in their homes. State violence is commonplace, and those in power face no accountability. Legislators enact oppressive and inhumane laws weekly. ***While it may seem like the rise of fascism, the government's injustices are nothing new.***

The United States is built upon stolen Indigenous land and the labor of kidnapped and enslaved Africans. The infrastructure of the nation is itself exploitative and racist. European enslavers and colonizers crafted the concept of race itself to justify the transatlantic slave trade, simultaneously dehumanizing and vilifying folks of the African diaspora. The idea that inherent behavioral racial differences exist set the precedent for systemic racism against all people of color. The atrocities of today are the legacy of the so-called founding fathers. The government agents patrolling neighborhoods and terrorizing our communities—ICE—operate like modern-day slave patrols.

Slave patrols operated as the first form of policing; fearing rebellion from enslaved folks, volunteer patrols kept surveillance of their activity through punitive measures. More specifically, white folks wanted to maintain the social and economic power that enslaving Black folks provided them. Patrols searched roads between plantations to stop and question Black folks, demanding to see permission passes that stated consent from the enslaver for the enslaved person to travel somewhere off the plantation. When a pass could not be presented, the patrols kidnapped the individuals and took them back to the plantation where they were enslaved. Corporal punishment against those captured often took place, and no laws prevented the use of violence.

Furthermore, the patrols searched plantations and dispersed gatherings of enslaved folks. Fearing the power that knowledge would provide, patrols destroyed books and materials that increased literacy. These methods of constant surveillance and threats of violence were to deter enslaved folks from running away, becoming literate, and garnering power and organizing. Eventually, these voluntary patrols became mandatory by law in certain states, and those who did not fulfill these roles were subject to fines.

The state-sanctioned kidnappings and terrorizing of Black people became legalized nationwide via the Fugitive Slave Law, part of the Compromise of 1850. It followed the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793, which allowed enslavers to hunt for those who had run away from slavery in free states and punished those who hid fugitives. The Fugitive Slave Law intensified and expanded the role of the state by assigning U.S. marshals, and in some cases, the U.S. Army, to hunt runaway enslaved folks. The government financially rewarded U.S. Commissioners for identifying a person as a fugitive, and aiding fugitives was punishable by imprisonment and a large fine. Slave patrols threatened Black folks and maintained the social power of white folks through reinforcing slavery. The surveillance, threats, and punishment doled out by patrols helped lead to the formation of law enforcement. ICE serves as immigration police and is the living legacy of slave patrols.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement is one of three branches established in 2003 by the newly formed Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Before DHS, the U.S. Customs Service and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) handled immigration affairs. After 9/11, the U.S. government underwent a structural rearrangement, creating the Department of Homeland Security to protect national security and prevent

terrorism. As one of the agencies of DHS, ICE adopted the roles of Customs and the INS, working to enforce immigration laws and combat transnational criminal activity. The formation of ICE criminalized migration; it assigned both civil and criminal violations to the same agency. Immigrants are treated as criminals by ICE agents, despite immigration violations being a civil offense. Following 9/11, the government used racist and Islamophobic tactics, targeting folks who fit into similar demographics as those responsible for 9/11, including Muslim, Black, brown, Arab, and South Asian communities. Similar to how slave patrols searched the quarters of enslaved folks and broke up gatherings, ICE increased surveillance in these folks' communities, targeted mosques, and subjected them to interrogation regarding their religious and political beliefs. The state threatened punishment against these communities to silence and suppress them; patrols aimed to deter potential uprisings among enslaved folks, and ICE terrorized Muslim, Black, and brown communities to incite fear and prevent them from organizing.

As large numbers of Latin Americans migrated to the United States in the 2010s, ICE began directing its attention to their communities. Since then, ICE has continued to target Latinx folks. They are portrayed as criminals arriving to take jobs, housing, money, and to commit crimes against white women and children. As more Latinx folks immigrate to the U.S., the demographic size of white folks in the U.S. lessens. The growing presence of Latinx folks threatens the political and social power of white supremacy. **Slave patrols existed to assert dominance over Black folks and maintain white power, and ICE targets Latinx folks in the same effort to assert white supremacy.**

The methods that ICE uses parallel those of slave patrols. The agreements made between state and federal agents, as seen in the Fugitive Slave Law and in ICE's collaboration with local law enforcement, grant all law enforcement officers greater power. These agreements increase the potential for state-sanctioned violence and less accountability. ICE works alongside the police through 287 (g) agreements, which give police the authority to operate as immigration officers. Within this jurisdiction, police use highway checkpoints and traffic stops to target folks of color and detain them for potential immigration violations. Just as patrols stopped Black folks with no reason other than their skin color, police officers operating as ICE do the same to all folks of color. ICE agents, fueled by the state's increased power, act outside their jurisdiction. ICE murders folks, including U.S. citizens, operating by their own personal sense of justice that is often fueled by racist beliefs. These officers received little to no consequences. The government similarly ignored the violence enacted by slave patrols, allowing officers to treat Black folks however they pleased with no repercussions. Created to "protect Americans from dangerous criminals," ICE perpetrates violence against vulnerable people who pose a threat to them. The government protects those in power who are kidnapping, murdering, and assaulting citizens. Slave patrols and ICE agents have always been granted immunity or let off with a warning, while the communities they oppress are left dead, suffering, and forgotten. State violence is a weapon to enforce control and domination, and law enforcement disproportionately uses it against folks of color, with slave patrols setting the precedent. Complacency from white folks strengthens the power of the state; when they challenge their privilege, they risk losing the benefits racial privilege grants

them. White folks can become victims of state violence when they take action against systems that uphold white supremacy. Slave patrols punished white folks who helped hide or help runaway enslaved folks. Similarly, ICE uses violence against white folks who aid immigrants or obstruct agents' tyranny.

ICE demands proof of permission in the form of visas just as slave patrols did. However, in both cases, the presentation of proof didn't stop officers from detaining or kidnapping those they stopped. Due process doesn't exist for folks of color. White folks have never had to prove their right to live in the United States. ***An individual's right to exist somewhere shouldn't require the approval of a government that stole the land it claims ownership over.***

The treatment of those captured by slave patrols and those captured by ICE is significant. Slave patrols sent enslaved folks back to the plantation where they were enslaved, and ICE agents send the folks they kidnap to detention centers. Detention centers serve as prisons. Imprisoned folks are restrained in cells, have their property, privacy, and rights stripped away, and are isolated from the outside world. They also face violence from the officers, undergo constant surveillance, and receive inconsistent and negligent medical care. Furthermore, detention centers force folks to work for little to no pay. Detention centers, prisons, and plantations are often privatized and have become opportunities for corporations to have access to free, coerced labor. This is a form of enslavement. Plantations and slave patrols are not horrors of the past. They are taking place today in the forms of ICE and detention centers.

The Ice Age has always been here. Sustaining white supremacy through maintaining the power of the white, wealthy elite has always been the goal of the state. Black, brown, Indigenous, and all folks of color are treated as threats by all governmental agents, ICE and police alike. Recognizing that the true threat to safety is the systems that dictate, police, and target folks helps us take the first step to seeing past the terrorized immobility the government is trying to enforce. The never-ending disenfranchisement of people of color is an attempt to suppress their power through exhaustion and disillusionment. Their existence and survival are powerful; it is a reminder and evidence of opposition to all the state's efforts to silence and eradicate them. White folks must realize that liberation and community-centered power require that white supremacy be rejected, challenged, and uprooted.

Our liberation is collective, and none of us is truly ever free until we are all free. A world in which the government exploits any neighbor is one that no one should be comfortable in. For us all to survive and flourish, we must work together. The state tries to make everyone feel powerless because together, we are stronger than they are. Together, we can imagine a world without borders, prisons, detention centers, surveillance, policing, and state violence. ***Beyond that, we can dream of the world we want to create together—the communities, culture, and collaboration we can cultivate.***

What would it look like in a world where everyone is free? To get there, we start by tapping into the work that already exists, work organized by Black, brown, and Indigenous folks, learning from the ancestors who survived and fought against this system. We protect and fight for our communities because our government never has and never will.

HISTORICAL SPOTLIGHT

Immigrant organizers have been working to fight against ICE's terrorism since its formation. During President Obama's term, millions of immigrants were deported. Detention centers hold those kidnapped by ICE, where trans and queer immigrants are significantly more likely to face neglect and abuse at these centers. In 2015, Jennicet Gutiérrez, an undocumented, trans Latina leader of Family: TQLM, an organization dedicated to achieving justice and liberation for trans, queer, and gender non-conforming Latinx folks, spoke up at President Obama's speech at he White House regarding progress in LGBTQ rights in the United States; she addressed him directly, saying, "Release all LGBTQ detention centers! President Obama, stop the torture and abuse of trans women in detention centers! President Obama, I am a trans woman. I'm tired of the abuse. I'm tired." Gutiérrez's courage should inspire us to continue to speak up and act against injustice.

HISTORICAL SPOTLIGHT

Los organizadores inmigrantes han estado trabajando para combatir el terrorismo de ICE desde su formación.Durante el mandato de presidente Obama, millones de inmigrantes fueron deportados. En los centros de detención que retienen a las personas secuestradas por ICE, los inmigrantes trans y queer tienen una probabilidad significativamente mayor de sufrir negligencia y abuso. Jennicet Gutiérrez, una Latina trans indocumentada, es una líder de Familia: TQLM, una organización dedicada al logro de la justicia y liberación para los latinxs trans, queer, y disidentes de género. En 2015, mientras presidente Obama daba un discurso sobre el progreso de los derechos LGBT en los Estados Unidos, Gutierréz alzó la voz. Se dirigió directamente a él, diciendo: "¡Libere todos los LGBTQ de los centros de detención! Presidente Obama, ¡detenga la tortura y el abuso de las mujeres trans en los centros de detención! Presidente Obama, soy una mujer trans. Estoy cansada de los abusos. Estoy cansada." El coraje de Gutiérrez debería inspirarnos a seguir alzando la voz y actuando contra la injusticia.

"The subtle and deadly change of heart that might occur in you would be involved with the realization that it is not necessary that people be wicked a civilization is not destroyed by wicked people. but only that they be spineless."

— James Baldwin, The Fire Next Time

"The function of freedom is to free someone else."

– Toni Morrison

Enemy of the Sun
by Samih al-Qasim

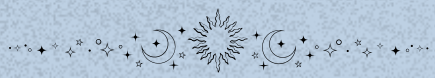
I may – if you wish – lose my livelihood
I may sell my shirt and bed.
I may work as a stone cutter,
A street sweeper, a porter.
I may clean your stores
Or rummage your garbage for food.
I may lie down hungry,
O enemy of the sun,
But
I shall not compromise
And to the last pulse in my veins
I shall resist.

You may take the last strip of my land,
Feed my youth to prison cells.
You may plunder my heritage.
You may burn my books, my poems
Or feed my flesh to the dogs.
You may spread a web of terror
On the roofs of my village,
O enemy of the sun,
But
I shall not compromise
And to the last pulse in my veins
I shall resist.

You may put out the light in my eyes.
You may deprive me of my mother's kisses.
You may curse my father, my people.
You may distort my history,
You may deprive my children of a smile
And of life's necessities.
You may fool my friends with a borrowed face.
You may build walls of hatred around me.
You may glue my eyes to humiliations,
O enemy of the sun,
But

I shall not compromise
And to the last pulse in my veins
I shall resist.
O enemy of the sun
The decorations are raised at the port.
The ejaculations fill the air,
A glow in the hearts,
And in the horizon
A sail is seen
Challenging the wind
And the depths.
It is Ulysses
Returning home
From the sea of loss

It is the return of the sun,
Of my exiled ones
And for her sake, and his
I swear
I shall not compromise
And to the last pulse in my veins
I shall resist,
Resist—and resist.



Written by poet Samih al-Qasim and published in a collection of Palestinian poetry, "Enemy of the Sun" is a transcendent piece about resistance. The poem was discovered hand-written amongst other writings from the prison cell of abolotionist and Black Panther Party member George Jackson. It was published under his name in the Black Panther Intercommunal New Service; only later did the editors realize the author of the poem was al-Qasim. This fateful misunderstanding goes to show the interconnection of Palestinian and Black liberation. Similarly, all our struggles are intertwined. It is our duty to help liberate each other.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

CoseCHA started as a project in 2020 with a vision to use storytelling as a medium for change. Dedicated to the critical discourse in our community and seeking to provide a platform for educational justice to all, it served as a way to incite a collective stride towards liberation in Chattanooga. Initiated by a small but mighty crew, they laid the groundwork for what we now know as CoseCHA! Five years later, we celebrate the rebirth of this publication by collectively remembering and carrying on the work of these comrades. In each of our editions, we will feature an excerpt from the archives of the original CoseCHA team! We hope that together we can remember the voices that carry us forward. The voices that time and time again remind us why we are here, and why the work we're doing matters.

SOLIDARITY NOT CHARITY

WHAT IS MUTUAL AID AND WHY WE NEED IT NOW

Mutual aid, in its many forms, is essentially cooperation for the sake of the common good. It's when people get together to meet each other's basic survival needs with a shared understanding that the systems we live under are not going to meet our needs. This article from the CoseCHA archives begins to imagine new alternative systems to typical modes of institutional aid from nonprofits and the government, inspiring us to imagine what mutual aid may look like here and now in Chattanooga.

BY JAKE VAN VALKENBURG

“Mutual aid, in its many forms, is essentially cooperation for the sake of the common good. It’s when people get together to meet each other’s basic survival needs with a shared understanding that the systems we live under are not going to meet our needs. While this phrase was novel to me, the fundamental practice of helping one another survive goes back to the dawn of human civilization.

In the past, we’ve seen mutual aid efforts operate among recently freed Black people following slavery, in Puerto Rico during the wreckage of Hurricane Maria in 2017, and most famously, throughout the various survival programs implemented by the Black Panther Party such as their free breakfast program and free health clinics.

As we move further into the pandemic and worsening effects of capitalism, I believe it is critical that we begin to imagine new alternative systems to typical modes of institutional aid from nonprofits and the government. Though institutions can provide necessary direct relief, the people can move faster to meet immediate needs and are better equipped to understand exactly what needs to be done for their specific communities.

Many mutual aid projects function under the principle of ‘solidarity not charity.’ Mutual aid simply recognizes that if you’re human and you need help, we got your back. It operates with the understanding that it’s not you, but the system that creates poverty, crisis and vulnerability. Compared to charity, solidarity through mutual aid brings people together across lines of difference, and that within itself is incredibly powerful.”

FOR THE FULL ARTICLE, VISIT OUR SUBSTACK: @COSECHA

VOTING SEASON IS SOON!

ARE YOU REGISTERED?

Who are we voting for? Both the federal primary elections and the general county elections take place on Augsut 6th 2026. The primaries for the federal election will vote for House and Senate seats in TN, and the county election will vote for the County Mayor, County Commissioners in all Districts, the County Sherrif, Various Court Clerks, and the Lookout Mountain School Board (District 3)

How do I know if I'm registered to vote? Scan the QR Code below to check your registration status if you are a resident in Hamilton County, TN:

tnmap.tn.gov/voterlookup/

When does voting take place? The voter registration deadline for Tennessee for the upcoming election is Monday, July 7th, 2026. Hamilton County primaries take place on Thursday, August 6th 2026.

How do I register to vote? Visit the link via the QR code below to register online. You can also head to either the County Election Commission Office, the County Clerk's Office, the Chattanooga Public Library, or the Register of Deeds Office to pick up a physical copy to sign and mail to/drop off at 700 River Terminal Road, Chattanooga, TN 37406

ovr.govote.tn.gov

If you need help with voting, contact us!

RECS AND RESOURCES

Reading:

Freedom is a Constant Struggle by Angela Davis

White Tears/Brown Scars by Ruby Hamad

We Do This 'Til We Free Us by Mariame Kaba

The Fire Next Time by James Baldwin

CHATTANOOGA SOLIDARITY FREE STORE NOT CHARITY

Location:

1701 Dodson Avenue, Suite A
Chattanooga, TN 37406
info@chattfreestore.org

Song:

Ice Age by Patrick Cowley

SEMILLASTN

our mission is to organize, mobilize, build power, and transform the city we call home through the power of education.

DON'T FORGET IMMIGRANTS HAVE RIGHTS

If I.C.E. approaches you in your car, home, or workplace do NOT:

OPEN THE DOOR
communicate through the window or a closed door. Agents can only enter your home with an arrest warrant **SIGNED BY A JUDGE.**

SPEAK
You have the right to remain silent. Say **OUT LOUD** that you will not answer any questions.

SIGN DOCUMENTS
Do not sign any documents without an attorney present.

PROTECT YOUR COMMUNITY!

WHAT WE DO

- Verify & document rumors of I.C.E. presence
- Share relevant information & materials with community members, such as Know Your Rights cards.
- Empower folks to declare their homes, workplaces, and cities as I.C.E.-free zones

423 - 402 - 0820

SAVE OUR NUMBER

CALL OR TEXT US TO REPORT POTENTIAL I.C.E. SIGHTINGS

and remember, use the S.A.L.U.T.E. method to prevent spreading panic!

HOW TO REPORT

ALWAYS REMEMBER S.A.L.U.T.E.

S IZE & STREGNTH
"5 to 6 officers in 4 vehicles"

A CTIONS/ACTIVITY
"Harassing 3 walking civilians"

L OCATION/DIRECTION
"34th street across from East Lake"

U NIFORM/CLOTHES
"Green vests that say "I.C.E. on the back"

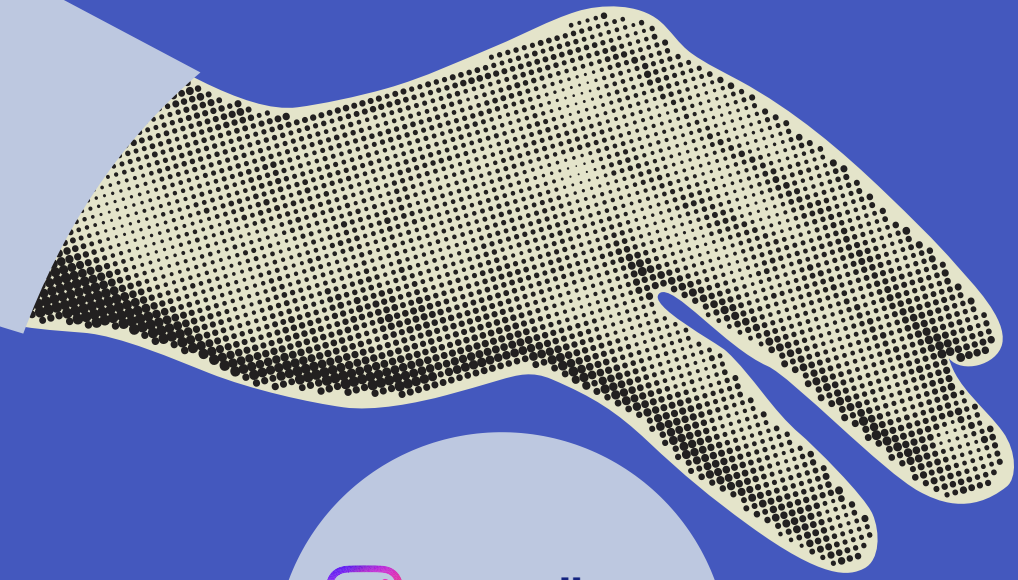
T IME & DATE
"9:15 a.m. on August 8th"

E QUIPTMENT & WEAPONS
"They have batons & helmets"

SEMILLASTN

@SEMILLASTN
FOLLOW US FOR UPDATES & WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

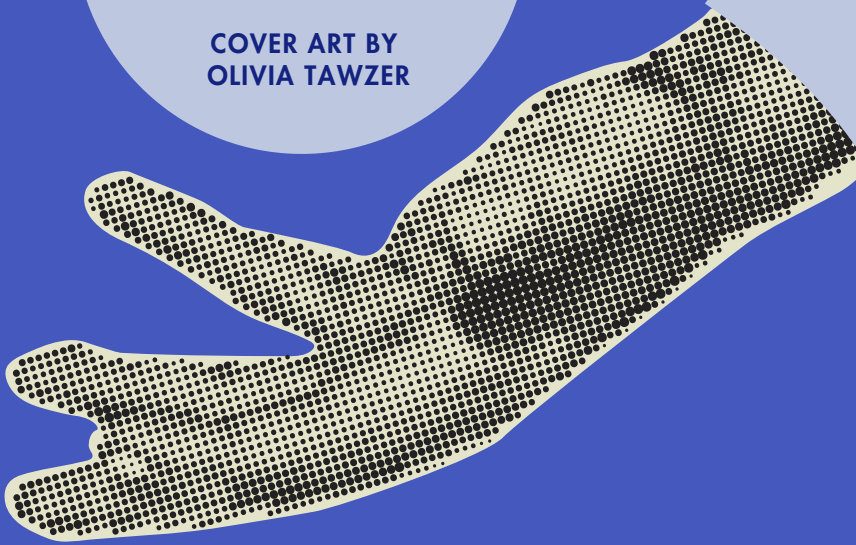
CoseCHA



@semillastn

@COSECHA

COVER ART BY
OLIVIA TAWZER



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